

AMENDMENTS

Please amend claim 1 as shown below showing additions and deletions from the original claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A tensioner for a surgical tape, said tensioner comprising:
attaching means whereby said tensioner can be attached to a point on a length of surgical tape; and
holding means whereby said tensioner can restrainably engages a second point of said surgical tape, ~~the first and second points being longitudinally separated from each other along the length of surgical tape.~~
2. (Original) The tensioner of claim 1, wherein said tensioner is formed of plastic.
3. (Original) The tensioner of claim 1, wherein said attaching means comprises an elongated slot through the said unitary tensioner body.
4. (Original) The tensioner of claim 1, wherein said holding means comprises a circular opening through said unitary tensioner body.
5. (Original) The tensioner of claim 1, wherein said holding means comprises an elongated slot through the said unitary tensioner body.
6. (Original) A tensioner for a surgical tape comprising a unitary tensioner body having a first opening and a second opening passing therethrough,
wherein said first opening has a first section having size and shape such that a surgical tape of a given size can frictionally move through said first opening and a second section having a size and shape to restrainably engage the surgical tape of a given size,
wherein said second opening has a size and shape to restrainably engage the surgical tape of a given size.

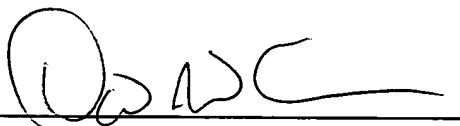
7. (Original) The tensioner of claim 6, wherein said tensioner is formed of plastic.
8. (Original) The tensioner of claim 6, wherein said first section of said first opening has a circular cross-section.
9. (Original) The tensioner of claim 6, wherein said second section of said first opening is an elongated slot.
10. (Original) The tensioner of claim 6, wherein said second opening is an elongated slot.
11. (Original) A method of clamping an elongated anatomical structure, such as a blood vessel, the method comprising the steps of:
 - attaching a tensioner, having a unitary body, to a length of surgical tape;
 - passing a portion of said surgical tape around the elongated body structure; and
 - securing said surgical tape in place by inserting a section of said surgical tape into a gripping portion of said tensioner.
12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said attaching step comprises securing a free end of said length of surgical tape in a slot in said tensioner.
13. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said securing step comprises threading said length of surgical tape through an opening in said tensioner.

CONCLUSION

A First Office Action on the merits is now respectfully awaited. If there are any outstanding issues that the Examiner feels may be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact David W. Carstens at 972-367-2001.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any payments that may be due or credit any overpayments to CARSTENS & CAHOON, LLP Deposit Account 50-0392.

Respectfully submitted by:



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